

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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DEPARTMENT FOR NEA/ARN

USDOC FOR CAGNE

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: BEXP, JO
SUBJECT: POTENTIAL GOJ PURCHASE OF TWO GULFSTREAM II AIRCRAFT

1. PROMINENT LOCAL BUSINESSMAN, MOHAMMAD ASFOUR, WHO IS WELL AND FAVORABLY KNOWN TO EMBASSY, HAS REQUESTED ASSISTANCE IN EXPEDITING CERTAIN ASPECTS OF DISCUSSIONS HE HAS RECENTLY CONDUCTED WITH GRUMMAN AIRCRAFT OFFICIALS VIA TELEX.

2. NEAR END OF 1973, ASFOUR WAS INVOLVED IN PUTTING TOGETHER PACKAGE FOR SALE OF GULFSTREAM II AIRCRAFT TO JORDANIAN MILITARY, WHICH WOULD SUBSEQUENTLY HAVE BEEN DEDICATED FOR USE BY KING HUSSEIN.

AT THAT TIME, EXPOERT-IMPORT BANK WAS APPARENTLY SERIOUSLY INTERESTED IN FINANCING SALE, ESTIMATED AT \$6 MILLION. THOUGH PACKAGE FELL THROUGH NEAR END OF 1974 DUE TO COMPLICATIONS IN JORDAN, ASFOUR APPARENTLY MADE SEVERAL PERSONAL CONTACTS WITH GRUMMAN OFFICIALS WHO WERE POSITIVELY IMPRESSED WITH HIM AND HIS ROLE IN NEGOTIATIONS.

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3. PROSPECTIVE PURCHASE OF TWO GULFSTREAM II'S (ABOUT \$12 MILLION) BY GOJ HAS RECENTLY RESURFACED. PURCHASE OF TWO SCCH AIRCRAFT WOULD BE BY JORDANIAN AIR FORCE: ONE WOULD SERVE FOR GOJ VIP TRAVEL AND SECOND WOULD BE FOR KING HUSSEIN. ASFOUR IS TRYING TO RENEW PREVIOUS RELATIONSHIP WITH GRUMMAN AND ACT AS AGENT FOR SALE. FOR REASONS UNCLEAR HERE, GRUMMAN OFFICIALS FIRST IN TOUCH WITH ASFOUR ON PRESENT POTENTIAL SALE WERE

UNWILLING TO MAKE COMMITMENT TO ENGAGE HIS SERVICES AS THEIR LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE. ASFOUR BELIEVES RELUCTANCE MAY BE BASED ON SOME CURRENT GRUMMAN OFFICIALS' FEAR OF POSSIBLE ILLEGITIMACY IN ASFOUR ROLE. AS ADDRESSEES AWARE, NOT ONLY IS PARTICIPATION OF LOCAL AGENTS PERMITTED IN FOREIGN SALES TO JORDAN, BUT UNDER JORDANIAN LAW, MOST FOREIGN SALES REQUIRE INTERMEDIATION OF LOCAL AGENT.

4. ASFOUR HAS BEEN IN CONTACT QUITE RECENTLY WITH GEORGE KUBIKA OF GRUMMAN LONDON OFFICE (KUBIKE WAS IN NEW YORK DURING 1973/1974 NEGOTIATIONS AND KNOWS ASFOUR) AND TONY NARJI OF GRUMMAN OFFICE IN WEST GERMANY. ON FEBRUARY 1, ASFOUR RECEIVED TELEX FROM FORMER INDICATING THAT DECISION TO APPOINT ASFOUR AS AGENT (IF ONLY FOR THIS SINGLE ONE-TIME SALE) IS STILL PENDING IN NEW YORK AND SAVANNAH, GEORGIA. IN MEANTIME, LOCAL AGENTS FOR FRENCH FALCON AND SABRELINER ARE ACTIVE IN PROMOTING INTERESTS OF THEIR PRINCIPALS WHILE APPARENTLY NO ONE IS ACTING FOR GRUMMAN.

5. ACTION REQUESTED--THAT NEA/ARN CONTACT GRUMMAN NEW YORK OFFICE ASAP TO DETERMINE STATUS OF ASFOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GRUMMAN. WHEREAS WE DO NOT WISH TO SUGGEST THAT GRUMMAN SHOULD ENTER INTO ANY PARTICULAR AGENCY ARRANGEMENT IN JORDAN, IT MAY BE POINTED OUT THAT LOCAL AGENTS IN JORDAN DO USUALLY ACT ON BEHALF OF FOREIGN PRINCIPALS IN SALES TO GOJ (THOUGH BY LAW IT IS NOT STRICTLY NECESSARY IN ALL CASES) AND THAT MOHAMMAD ASFOUR IS WELL AND FAVORABLY KNOWN TO EMBASSY. IN ANY CASE, UNCLASSIFIED

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IT SEEMS TO US UNLIKELY THAT GRUMMAN WILL MAKE THIS POTENTIAL SALE WITHOUT SOMEONE IN AMMAN ACTIVELY PROMOTING COMPANY'S INTEREST. FOR WHATEVER USE IT MAY BE, DURING 1973/1974 NEGOTIATIONS, FOLLOWING GRUMMAN OFFICERS BECAME ACQUAINTED WITH ASFOUR

AND SHOULD RECALL EVENTS OF THAT PERIOD, WHICH MAY BE OF SOME VALUE TO GRUMMAN IN EVALUATING DESIRABILITY OF SELECTION OF ASFOUR AS ITS AGENT (1974 TITLES AND OFFICE LOCATIONS FOLLOW):

JOSEPH E. ANCKNER, SALES MANAGER, SAVANNAH;

CHARLES G. VOGELY, VICE PRESIDENT FOR COMMERCIAL JET MARKETING (ALSO SAVANNAH);

ROSS C. CHAPIN, PRESIDENT, PAGE-GULFSTREAM INC., SAN ANTONIA, TEX.;

D. ROBERT HONES, VICE PRESIDENT, PAGE-GULFSTREAM, NEW YORK; AND ABOVE MENTIONED KUBIKE.

PICKERING

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